



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2008

## **\$4.30 a Gallon? Dump the Pump, June 19!**

**SEATTLE, Wash.** – With local gas prices higher than the national average, residents in the Puget Sound region have turned to public transportation in record numbers. A survey of local transit ridership in April 2008 showed 520,000 passengers using buses, trains, ferries, vanpools and paratransit to get around each weekday, a record high.

To demonstrate how easy it is to use transit, local agencies are urging residents to park their cars and ride public transportation on June 19, National Dump the Pump Day.

Community Transit, Everett Transit, Intercity Transit, King County Metro Transit, Kitsap Transit, Pierce Transit and Sound Transit are joining transit agencies across the country to ask those who've never tried transit to take a ride, and regular transit users to leave their vehicles at home and only use transit that day. That means hopping the bus or a train, sharing the ride in a carpool or vanpool, or using human power by cycling or walking.

"People are really thinking about how they get around and many are taking action by getting out of their cars and onto transit," said Joyce Eleanor, CEO of Community Transit. "Dump the Pump Day is a time for people to make a statement about the choices they're willing to make."

"Whether they are going to work, a doctor's office, or shopping, it is important for Puget Sound area residents to know that public mass transit offers them safe, reliable, and low-cost transportation choices," said Lynne Griffith, CEO of Pierce Transit.

While many new transit passengers are those who choose to leave their vehicles behind, others are being forced to find alternatives.

"Many people using transit these days simply cannot afford to drive their cars as much as they did in the past," said Kevin Desmond, general manager of King County Metro Transit. "It's not just commuters who want to save a few bucks. Some families are finding they need to leave their vehicles at home in order to pay the bills."

### **"I dumped the pump"**

To encourage participation in National Dump the Pump Day, Community Transit is flying the 1,000-stall Ash Way Park & Ride in Lynnwood to encourage regular commuters to take the bus from home to the park & ride that day. On June 19, the agency will invite riders to cover a poster depiction of a gas pump with stickers saying "I dumped the pump" between 6 and 8 a.m.

Pierce Transit will be distributing "I dumped the pump" stickers to riders at select transit centers throughout their system between 6:30 and 8 a.m. that day.

In Olympia, Intercity Transit is hosting a series of events and transit fairs providing transit trip planning and rideshare information to interested commuters. Thousands of people are expected to sign a roving “I dumped the pump” community banner this month and commuters traveling through area transit centers, the Capitol Campus and park and ride lot on June 19 will get “I dumped the pump” buttons.

Additionally, community leaders in Thurston County are showing support for National Dump the Pump Day by either using a commute alternative on June 19 or speaking publicly about the value and importance of transit to our communities and our individual lives.

“If we didn’t have transit, we’d have to spend millions more every year to build and widen roads, and still it wouldn’t relieve traffic congestion,” said Ralph Osgood, Mayor of Tumwater. When people choose to ride the bus, they’re not just saving their own money, they’re saving taxpayers’ money as well.”

The bus or train might not work best for everyone, and that is where RideshareOnline.com is great statewide resource. It provides an easy way to find others who are interested in sharing the commute in a carpool or vanpool. For example, Metro Transit has seen a 27 percent increase in people using vanpools and vanshares in the past year, and now has more than 1,000 commuter vans on the road. Community Transit has 352 vanpools on the road; Pierce Transit has 285 and Intercity Transit has 173 and Kitsap Transit has 115.

#### **Puget Sound Regional Transit Statistics**

##### **Public transportation in King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties covers:**

- 6,589 square miles including...
- 66 cities and towns,
- 447 bus routes,
- two transit agency ferry routes (Kitsap Transit),
- 83 miles of commuter rail (Sounder),
- 1.6 miles of light rail (17.2 miles by 2009).

##### **Average weekday ridership in April 2008, by agency (and contacts):**

- Community Transit, 40,000 (Martin Munguia, 425 348-2348)
- Everett Transit, 8,400 (Steffani Lillie, 425 257-8914)
- Intercity Transit, 14,000 (Meg Kester, 360 705-5842)
- Kitsap Transit, 15,000 (Laurie Talbert, 360 478-6225)
- King County Metro Transit, 340,000 (Rochelle Ogershok, 206 296-6515)
- Pierce Transit, 51,800 (Lars Erickson, 253 984-8218)
- Sound Transit, 53,990 (Linda Robson, 206 398-5149)

Many of the region’s commuting options are outlined at: <http://transit.metrokc.gov/tops/tri/tri-main.html>.

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